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AFTER THE STORM:
THE "NEW CONCEPT" AND THE "SMALL WAR" CHALLENGE

by

LCDR M.R. Michaels, USN

A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Joint Military Operations Department.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.

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16 June 1995

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Abstract of

AFTER THE STORM:

THE "NEW CONCEPT" AND THE "SMALL WAR" CHALLENGE

The Gulf War has significantly influenced our attitudes and perceptions about war. The "New Concept" views war as conflict won quickly and decisively with minimum casualties. The means to this end is superior military technology applied within the context of Joint combined-arms operations.

Conditions necessary for the "New Concept" to deliver quick, low-cost victory may be articulated as "attributes" which characterize the ideal enemy. Evaluation on the level of strategic theory indicates the asymmetric nature of any conflict involving America will militate against the enemy having these "attributes." Evaluation of the ethno-religious "small wars" which characterize our present age suggests the prospect for quick, low-cost victory in these conflicts to be similarly remote.

Although the "New Concept's" preferred operational context, Joint combined-arms operations, will not lend itself to universal employment, its "ethic" of quick, low-cost victory will tend to be applied to all military situations. The Commander will find himself attempting to resolve the tension between accomplishing the mission and the need for "zero defects" warfare.

Despite the "New Concept" focus on mid-intensity, conventional conflict, the "most-likely case" conflict in the out years is the ethno-religious "small war." These "small wars" will be challenging because of their prolificacy, the streamlining of our military, and unrealistic public expectations resulting from Desert Storm. To address this challenge, the United States should broaden its military field of view to include all conflict types, strengthen its Special Forces and intelligence capabilities, diversify its military technology and, if possible, attempt a coup de main in these "small wars."

Having emerged from the Cold War as the world's lone superpower, the United States is in the process of redefining both its vital national interests and the means by which they will be secured. This process has been challenging because the present epoch has resisted distillation into a consistent and coherent frame of reference.

Transition from the Cold War world has been easier for some segments of the security community than for others. For while Samuel Huntington, et.al.¹ continue to search for a new strategy to replace the old, we in the U.S. military have found our new direction. *We have seen the future of war--it was called Desert Storm.*

The Emergence of the "New Concept"

The performance of the American-led coalition in the Gulf War provided "a demonstration of raw military power that shocked not just Iraq, but uniformed and civilian pundits worldwide."² Desert Storm's impact on the U.S. military has been tremendous, significantly influencing our attitudes and perceptions about war.

Deriving its substance from Desert Storm's themes and lessons-learned, a "New Concept"³ of war has manifested itself within post-war professional military thought and literature. Characterizing the "New Concept" is a tendency to view war as *conflict won quickly and decisively with minimum casualties on either side.*⁴ The "New Concept" relies on *superior military technology* as the means to achieve this end, and emphasizes standoff precision weaponry and information dominance within the context of Joint combined-arms operations.⁵ The core tenets of the "New Concept" are reflected in America's most recent National Military Strategy.⁶ Thanks to Desert Storm, it appears that what was once an ideal--quick, low-cost victory in war--has become our new standard of military performance.

It is the thesis of this paper that the "New Concept" of war, with its core theme of quick and low-cost victory through technology, will find few opportunities for successful employment in the New World Order, and that it will be ill-suited to meet the "small war" challenge that characterizes the post-Cold War period..

The intent of this paper is not to minimize the remarkable feat of Desert Storm, but to demonstrate that the conditions required to duplicate the Gulf War performance will prove elusive.⁷ Toward this end, the paper will identify key strategic and operational conditions upon which our ability to win a quick and low-cost victory depends. The likelihood that America will find these conditions present in her future conflicts will then be evaluated on the levels of strategic theory and real-world operations. The latter assessment will not, however, focus on the "best case" mid-intensity conventional conflict for which the "New Concept" is believed ideally suited.⁸ Rather, it will take a "most-likely case" approach to focus on the prevailing genre of warfare in today's world: ethno-religious "small wars."⁹ Discussion will be limited to factors affecting the ability of the "New Concept" to provide quick and low-cost victory as a means of military suasion; this paper will not address the ethics of intervention or the political decision to commit combat forces. The paper will conclude with discussion of the challenge posed by "small wars" in the post-Cold War period.

To lay the groundwork for discussion to follow, it is necessary to first examine the integral relationship between the "New Concept" and America's strategic center of gravity. For it is America's center of gravity, as much as our Desert Storm experience, that has defined the parameters of the "New Concept" of war.

Protecting America's Center of Gravity

America's strategic center of gravity has become public opinion, an apparently unavoidable consequence of our superpower status.¹⁰ As the world's

lone superpower, no single adversary can, for the foreseeable future, pose a direct military challenge to our national survival. Therefore, America's wars will be limited as opposed to total wars; our participation in these wars will, for the most part, reflect a "rational calculus" of costs versus benefits and result from political rather than military imperatives.¹¹ These political imperatives will be largely determined and shaped by public opinion. Pending a genuine threat to our survival, America's center of gravity, the primary factor upon which our ability to conduct and sustain military action depends, will be public opinion.

America's strategic center of gravity possesses two critical vulnerabilities: casualties and protracted conflict. The desire to minimize casualties is understandable, for the "high value attached to the life of each individual" is a common Western sentiment.¹² However, the United States is almost unique in its abhorrence of casualties. "This attitude toward casualties is rare--save in Israel."¹³ America does not suffer protracted conflict gladly. Some of this is undoubtedly "baggage" from the Vietnam War. However, political scientist Andrew Mack points to erosion of public support as the inevitable result of protracted conflict for a large democratic nation fighting a limited war.¹⁴ The "New Concept" seeks to protect America's strategic center of gravity, public opinion, by limiting the enemy's military access to our critical vulnerabilities of casualties and protracted conflict. It is not by coincidence that the "ends" of the "New Concept" are "low-cost" and "quick" victory, and it is against these criteria that it succeeds or fails.

Conditions for Success

A number of key strategic and operational conditions must be present if the "New Concept" is to deliver quick and low-cost victory. These conditions can be articulated in the form of three "attributes" which together characterize America's ideal adversary.

Attribute One: *The enemy should look like us.*

This attribute is required to optimize our force application and intelligence capabilities. To provide a pre-definable fixed-target set, America's adversary should be an established nation-state. He should possess and depend upon an infrastructure of integrated energy, transportation, communications, and military command and control systems. Our operational fires will focus precision weapons against critical nodes within these infrastructures, exploiting their interdependence to multiply the effects of our weapons both horizontally and vertically; tactical-level strikes will provide strategic results.¹⁵

Our adversary's military should possess some degree of technological sophistication, for much of our military technology is designed to counter enemy systems, some in quite specific fashions. Anti-radiation missiles presuppose enemy radars and so on. In a similar manner, much of our military intelligence capability (and our intelligence collection systems in particular) is devoted to detecting and locating the enemy's military systems and equipment. Our intelligence systems locate enemy systems to support targeting by friendly weapons systems. "Information dominance" will be achieved by collecting and collating *quantitative intelligence*, data focused on the *measurable characteristics* of enemy military systems, such as radio frequency and geographic location.¹⁶

Attribute Two: *The enemy should fight like us.*

This attribute is required to ensure target accessibility and the presence of operational depth. The enemy should adopt a conventional military strategy. This will provide us with timely access to enemy forces, as opposed to having to "seek out" an adversary waging a Fabian or unconventional strategy. Preferably, his conventional strategy should be executed at the operational level of war. This will provide concentrations of his forces against which to focus our fires. It will also

provide the spatial component of operational depth through the establishment of well-defined forward and rear areas. Exploiting this depth, we will fight from a distance, simultaneously protecting own forces while attriting the enemy throughout his depth with our standoff strike capability. Once the enemy has been "sufficiently weakened," our own surface assault will proceed.¹⁷

Attribute Three: *The enemy should think like us.*

The primary focus of this attribute is war termination. In order for us to achieve quick, decisive victory with minimum casualties on either side, our enemy should be susceptible to the same "rational calculus" of costs and benefits. Once he realizes his untenable position, he should seek a negotiated settlement; he should not have to be "beaten into submission." *Like ourselves, he should view attrition warfare as a non-option.* It would be helpful, therefore, if he would share our views on the value of the individual human life, as well as our concern for world public opinion.¹⁸ These factors would dissuade him from resorting to terrorist or hostage-taking tactics, or using weapons of mass destruction.

Fearful Asymmetries

That America's enemy will "look like us" is, of course, situation-dependent. Although it would be to America's advantage for our adversary to "fight" and "think like us," we would be unwise to expect this, since *the asymmetric nature of a war involving the United States will militate against our enemy exhibiting either of these attributes.*

Because the enemy is unlikely to defeat us militarily, his only viable avenue for victory is to defeat our political will to wage war. Toward this end, he will seek political attrition through "a steady imposition of 'costs'" over time. As Andrew Mack explains:

"... I pointed out that an obvious minimal requirement for victory was that the insurgents should not lose. They achieved this by refusing to confront the industrial powers on their own terms and by resorting instead to 'unconventional' forms of warfare -- guerrilla war, urban terrorism, or even nonviolent action."¹⁹

Clausewitz's principle of polarity in war similarly indicates that "If action would bring advantage to one side, the other's interest must be to wait."²⁰ It would then appear unlikely that the enemy will meet us in the symmetrical, conventional war we seek.

Cultural factors notwithstanding, it is also unlikely that our enemy will think like us. Because he is opposing a superpower (and fighting on his own territory), our enemy will tend to view his conflict with the United States as an unlimited war of survival.²¹ The implications for war termination and possible enemy employment of "all available means" are obvious.

When evaluated on the level of strategic theory, then, *the "New Concept" of War appears flawed, suggesting as it does an unrealistic degree of symmetry between ourselves and our adversaries as a prerequisite for success.* Will the real-world conflicts of the post-Cold War era be any more accommodating?

Confronting Ethno-religious Conflict

Although the bipolar tensions of the Cold War have eased and the threat of global nuclear war has receded, the world has not become an appreciably safer place in which to live. Colin Gray, chairman of the National Institute for Public Policy, provides the following characterization of our present security environment:

The dawning of a period of superpower peace is far from heralding an era of general peace. Indeed, in part as a result of the removal of Cold War structures, national, ethnic, communal, religious, and cultural antagonisms are very much the flavor of the decade.²²

And, indeed, these predominately ethnic and religious "wars of national debilitation" seem to have become endemic.²³ The United States has been fortunate. Thus far our intervention in these conflicts has been elective and altruistic--although not entirely painless. If only due to the sheer prolificacy of these wars and insurgencies, it is likely that America will, at some point in the future, find it necessary to intervene decisively with combat forces in an ethno-religious "small war" to protect its national interests.²⁴

Is our "New Concept" of war likely to deliver quick, low-cost victory in such conflicts? The following assessment of ethno-religious civil war and insurgency is keyed to the three "attributes" which characterize the "New Concept's" "best case" adversary.

Attribute One : *The enemy should look like us.*

In view of current trends, our enemy is less likely to be a nation-state and *more likely to be a subnational, or even transnational, group.* This will present several problems regarding the effectiveness of operational fires. The decisive effects of these fires, a key feature of Desert Storm, will probably be lessened, for the enemy is not likely to provide an Iraqi-style set of fixed targets. Nor is he likely to have appropriate infrastructure features upon which to concentrate these fires. There will be a greater relative percentage of mobile targets. We need only remember Desert Storm's "Scud hunting" effort to realize the challenge this could pose.²⁵

Enemy surface operations are unlikely to feature large force formations that would provide lucrative targets for maneuver and the massing of fires. Potential enemy use of forces who are "irregulars," a contemporary trend in Third World conflicts, presents the fundamental problem of threat identification.²⁶ According to Major General S.L. Arnold, who commanded the 10th Mountain Division in Somalia,

"individual soldiers and units found it difficult to determine who the enemy was."²⁷ Inability to identify the enemy not only hampers offensive operations, but compounds the difficulty of force protection--a problem which is especially critical in high-terrorism threat environments.

The subnational character of our adversary will challenge our intelligence capabilities. Unless the enemy is a group of some longstanding, we are unlikely to have accumulated significant data as to his operational patterns and preferences, key personalities, command and control, etc. We will be playing "catch-up" as we prepare the intelligence battlefield, and our collection systems, optimized to gather *quantitative intelligence*, will not be providing the kind of intelligence we will need. For as we descend the continuum of war toward low intensity conflict, *qualitative intelligence*, which provides enemy intentions, actual as opposed to presumed capabilities, etc., becomes increasingly important to support operations. The definitive source for qualitative intelligence in the low intensity conflict setting is human intelligence or HUMINT. Unlike technical or "other" intelligence collection systems, HUMINT collection cannot be "redirected" for immediate reporting on a new trouble area; it is a manpower-intensive enterprise which takes time to produce results. Even at best, ethno-religious groups are difficult HUMINT targets, for their homogeneous structures are not easily penetrated. But when intervening in ethno-religious conflict, the HUMINT product may be critical. According to General Arnold, "In Somalia, our counterintelligence agents were our major source of the intelligence information that shaped maneuver operations."²⁸

He will be well-armed. Although the enemy's technological sophistication may not provide the desired level of stimulation for our intelligence apparatus, he will probably possess firepower "systems that only 15 or 20 years ago were state of the art and hence very lethal."²⁹ Increasingly, the enemy may possess a "high-low" mixture of military technology, possibly to include weapons of mass destruction.

Attribute Two: *The enemy should fight like us.*

Contemporary Third World wars in general, and ethno-religious conflicts in particular (reflecting the "historical" enmity of the belligerents), are *protracted wars of attrition*.³⁰ The problem this poses for the United States on both the strategic and operational levels should be self-evident, for the "New Concept," with its core theme of quick and low-cost victory, represents de facto renunciation of attrition warfare.

Another disturbing Third World conflict trend is the increased urbanization of warfare.³¹ The reader need only remember Beirut and Sarajevo. Urban warfare is labor intensive and does not readily lend itself to counterstrategies. "Such combat operations entail substantial difficulties for forces relying on armour or firepower because those assets cannot be easily used or used to their full advantage in such scenarios."³²

Based on Lebanon and the former Yugoslavia, America's enemy in ethno-religious conflict will be evasive and difficult for us to access with our weaponry. Rather than meet us in a conventional war, he will "specialize in hit-and-run raids, ambushes, sabotage, hostage-taking, and terrorism rather than traditional tactics."³³ We can expect to encounter an environment of low intensity conflict, which may include guerrilla warfare and terrorism. The distinction between front and rear areas will be nonexistent. As a result, the spatial dimension of operational depth will cease to exist. At this point, "depth in time is more relevant than depth in space." To expand his depth in time, our adversary will seek to control the tempo. We will find it "nearly impossible to wrest the initiative" from him at either tactical or operational level.³⁴

Attribute Three: *The enemy should think like us.*

Perhaps more than anything else, today's ethno-religious wars resemble the anti-colonial wars of the post-World War II era. As before, the common dynamic is

nationalism,³⁵ only this time in subnational form. Nevertheless, the persistent character of nationalism retains its ideological component--its "psychological appeal to the masses."³⁶ The enemy's strategic center of gravity will be cultural and, therefore, difficult to act upon militarily. The primal motive of these conflicts will manifest itself in two principal areas of concern.

First, *wars propelled by such "basic instincts" will be extremely bloody*, as "differences between groups help overcome natural constraints on violence by dehumanizing the enemy."³⁷ Within this "war of survival" context, anything goes. World opinion is ignored as belligerents employ "all available means to win."³⁸ Our enemy will resort to terrorism in pursuit of political victory. His terrorist acts may be directed against our forces or--as evidenced by recent events in New York City--against the United States itself. Either way, media coverage will allow terrorists to directly access our strategic center of gravity. Similarly, the enemy may not hesitate to use weapons of mass destruction. The force protection implications are obvious and serious.

Not only will the "gut level" quality of these conflicts manifest itself in high levels of violence and the possible employment of taboo tactics and weapons, it will also make conflict resolution by negotiated settlement extremely unlikely. From their perspective, belligerents in ethno-religious conflict are fighting for their individual and group existence. *Such an adversary will not be given to compromise--he will have to be soundly beaten.*

Reconciling Ends and Means: The Operational Conundrum

All of which would indicate that America's "New Concept" of war holds little promise of delivering decisive, low-cost intervention in ethno-religious conflict. Why does America's supposed panacea appear so inflexible? The problem lies in the *specificity of the "New Concept's" operational context.* The AirLand Battle concept,

as utilized in the Gulf War, was "designed primarily for conventional conflict in Europe,"³⁹ and was optimized for such a conventional and symmetrical conflict. Only against the Warsaw Pact, or certain of its clients, could the requisite degree of *symmetry be presupposed*. As a symmetrical, conventional conflict, Desert Storm represented a "lesser, included case" of the war the U.S. had been preparing to fight for four decades.⁴⁰ Joint combined-arms operations will not translate well to the "small wars" of which today's ethno-religious conflicts are a major subset. In such conflicts "distinctions between the strategic, operational, and tactical levels of war are nearly meaningless."⁴¹

And as Hamlet said, "there's the rub." For although the "New Concept's" preferred operational context is circumscribed in its real-world utility, *its mandatory ends of quick, decisive, low-cost success will tend to be applied to all military situations*. This is unavoidable, since this "ethic" is linked to the protection of our critical vulnerabilities. The disparity of military ends and means places our commanders under intense pressure: Every game must be a "no hitter." Toward this end, the quest for "remote" high-tech solutions to low-tech problems has produced some interesting operational innovations--witness, for example, the current fascination with the creation and enforcement of "no-fly" zones. And how, within this conundrum does the American military cope with the challenge of ethno-religious "small wars"? Or is it even a problem?

Meeting the "Small War" Challenge

Unfortunately, it is. For despite President Bush's optimistic declaration that "we've licked the Vietnam syndrome once and for all,"⁴² America's inability to pursue a protracted and asymmetrical "small war" to a definitive conclusion with combat forces is still with us. Indeed, America's "small war" challenge would appear greater now than ever before for the following reasons.

(1) *It's a "small war" world out there.* For the foreseeable future, the prevailing form of warfare is likely to remain intranational conflict. These will be protracted, high-violence wars of attrition between belligerents fighting for their individual and group survival. The present tide of divisive nationalism shows no sign of abating. The future is likely to mirror the recent past, providing more of what has already been seen in Somalia, 'Kurdistan,' Yugoslavia, Tadjikistan, Chechnya and Georgia.⁴³

(2) *Military streamlining.* The overall downsizing of the U.S. military, combined with increasing emphasis on military technology, may remove necessary redundancy from our military capability. Trading increasingly expensive and specialized technology (with its attendant support and logistics tails) for manpower could lead to a shortfall in the type of general-purpose forces necessary to meet the "small wars" challenge. The result could be a "streamlined," but "brittle" military, requiring "relatively predictable conditions to fight successfully."⁴⁴

(3) *Unrealistic expectations.* Pending a direct threat to the territorial integrity of the United States, the unrealistically-high public expectations regarding casualties and duration of war engendered by Desert Storm will make maintenance of public support for any future combat operations extremely challenging. This is not a prediction--it is a present fact : "The spectacle of a single American helicopter pilot being dragged through the streets of Mogadishu almost immediately caused the Clinton Administration to announce the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Somalia."⁴⁵ Conditioned by six weeks of virtually uninterrupted good news during Desert Storm, the American public will perceive military success which is slow in coming and requires casualties as failure; any actual setback could have a shattering effect.

Fortunately, there are some actions we can take to help America meet the "small war" challenge of the New World Order. They are as follows:

(1) *Broaden our field of vision.* The demise of European communism and the Gulf War have contributed to an climate of giddy "chronocentrism," which this writer defines as "the tendency to overestimate the significance of the present time." History has not ended, nor has the essential nature of war changed. It is still, as Clausewitz told us, a function of *material* means and *moral* will. That we have redefined war in terms of mid-intensity conflict (a la Desert Storm), choosing to call other situations "Military Operations Other Than War," does not mean the rest of the world will play by our rules. It is naive to believe that one or more ethno-religious "small wars" will not eventually require a military response from the United States. *We must be prepared to operate fluently and flexibly on all levels of the conflict spectrum, from conventional military "regional" threats to counterterrorism.*

(2) *Strengthen our Special Operations Forces.* They will necessarily be the first ones in and probably the last ones out of any intervention in an ethno-religious "small war." They are the forces most feared by the enemy. The precision force application capabilities they bring to the table will be invaluable in the atmosphere of tight political control which will characterize our limited wars.⁴⁶ The PSYOPS and civil affairs capabilities of these forces will also be much in demand; their active duty components should be strengthened.

(3) *Develop our military intelligence capabilities.* High-tech intelligence capabilities go only so far in "small wars." "Low-intensity conflict plans and operations founded on faulty intelligence usually fail. Instruments supplement, but cannot replace, agents skilled at clandestine intelligence collection."⁴⁷ An *in situ* HUMINT capability is required to enable potential "hot spots" to be identified early on. The attainment and maintenance of foreign area expertise by our personnel must be both encouraged and *rewarded*.

(4) *Emphasize multi-purpose technology.* We should seek diversification rather than specialization in our military technology. In the "small war" arena, the

greatest contribution of high-tech weapons will be "in relation to control rather than absolute combat power."⁴⁸ Precision *direct fire* platforms, such as AC-130 and helicopter gunships, will be especially important. Helicopters may comprise our primary maneuver capability.

(5) *Whenever possible, go for the coup de main.* Trends in contemporary Third World wars point to an "overwhelming initial assault" utilizing shock and deception as the best way to avoid a conflict of prolonged attrition. This objective will be difficult to accomplish for reasons previously discussed. Furthermore, the *coup de main* runs counter to the American "sense of fair play" and our traditional "graduated response" approach to intervention.⁴⁹ It also requires a commitment of forces and resources which may be politically unacceptable. As an alternative, pre-emptive "direct action" missions by special operations forces may offer quick and low-cost military solutions for some situations. Examples of potential "direct action" missions include disrupting the enemy's command structure and preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The success of such missions will depend upon an intelligence capability that is "forward-leaning" and able to identify appropriate targets early-on, while they are still susceptible to "surgical" military action.

Conclusion

Unrealistic military and public expectations raised by Desert Storm regarding the ability to win wars quickly and cheaply, and the effectiveness of high technology will be severely tested against a world backdrop of "brush fire wars" and primal animosities. Taken to its extreme, the search for the proper conditions within which to "replay the Gulf War"⁵⁰ could result in the marginalizing of American interests as one potential intervention situation after another falls into the "too hard" category.

The U.S. military must attempt to strike a balance between the type of wars we would prefer to fight--and the type of wars we may be required to fight.

The American military should be dubious about extrapolating too many long-range conclusions from the single case of the Gulf War. In Clausewitzian terms, we must not confuse an alteration in the *grammar* of war with a fundamental change in its underlying *logic*. "[T]he proper response to those who claim with certainty to have seen the future of warfare is at least wariness, if not incredulity."⁵¹

NOTES

¹ Samuel Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations," Foreign Affairs, Summer 1993, pp.22-49. See also Fouad Ajami, "The Summoning," and Kishore Mahbubani, "The Dangers of Decadence: What the West Can Teach the Rest," Foreign Affairs, September/October 1993, pp. 2-9, 10-14.

² Wayne K. Maynard, "Spears vs. Rifles: The New Equation of Military Power," Parameters, Spring 1993, p. 49.

³ The author's own terminology.

⁴ For the quintessential example of the "New Concept" see John A. Warden, III, "Employing Airpower in the Twenty-First Century," in The Future of Airpower in the Aftermath of the Gulf War eds. Richard J. Schultz, Jr. and Robert L. Pfaltzgraff, Jr. (Montgomery AFB, AL: Air University Press, 1992), p. 60. Per Grant Hammond, "A preoccupation with fighting only short, high-tech, low casualty wars is virtually a tenant of U.S. national military strategy." Grant T. Hammond, "Paradoxes of War," Joint Force Quarterly, Spring 1994, p. 13. The imperative to limit both friendly and enemy casualties can be found in Warden, pp. 57, 60-61, 69; also, Alan Stephens, "The Transformation of 'Low Intensity' Conflict," Small Wars and Insurgencies, Spring 1994, p. 147.

⁵ For operational and technological implications of the Gulf War see James R. Fitzsimonds and Jan M. Van Tol, "Revolutions in Military Affairs," Joint Force Quarterly, Spring 1994, pp. 24-31; Douglas A. MacGregor, "Future Battle: The Merging Levels of War," Parameters, Winter 1992-93, 33-47. Also see Warden and Maynard.

⁶ Specifically, "The United States must continue to rely heavily on technological superiority to offset quantitative advantages, to minimize risk to US forces, and to enhance the potential for swift, decisive termination of conflict." Also, "Therefore, one of the essential elements of our National Military Strategy is the ability to rapidly assemble the forces needed to win -- the concept of applying decisive force to overwhelm our adversaries and thereby terminate conflicts quickly with a minimum loss of life." National Military Strategy 1992, p. 10.

⁷ That said, the unique (and from a military standpoint, illogical) advantages enjoyed by the Coalition have received little more than cursory attention. See Jeffrey Record, "Defeating Desert Storm (And Why Saddam Didn't)," Comparative Strategy, April-June 1993, pp. 125-140; also, Thomas G. Mahnken, "America's Next War," The Washington Quarterly, Summer 1993, pp. 171-184.

⁸ According to Carnes Lord, "[T]he new paradigm will be mid-intensity conflict with adversaries such as Iraq or North Korea, where conventional forces and high technology will continue to dominate the battlefield. Carnes Lord, "American Strategic Culture in Small Wars," Small Wars and Insurgencies, Winter 1992, p. 210.

⁹ See, for example, Leslie H. Gelb, "The Teacup Wars," Foreign Affairs, November/December 1994, pp. 2-6.

¹⁰ Andrew J. Mack, "Why Big Nations Lose Small Wars: The Politics of Asymmetric Conflict," in Power, Strategy, and Security ed. Klaus Knorr (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), pp. 126-151. That public opinion represents America's strategic center of gravity is a conclusion similarly reached by Grant Hammond. Hammond, p. 13.

¹¹ Michael I. Handel, Masters of War (London: Frank Cass, 1992), p. 61.

¹² Michael I. Handel, War, Strategy and Intelligence, (London: Frank Cass, 1989), p. 98.

¹³ Gene I. Rochlin and Chris C. Demchak, "The Gulf War: Technological and Organizational Implications," Survival, May/June 1991, p. 268.

¹⁴ "In contrast to the total-war situation, the protagonists of a limited war have to compete for resources -- human, economic and political -- with protagonists of other interests -- governmental, bureaucratic, "interest groups," and so forth. Clearly if the war is terminated quickly. . . the potential for devisive domestic conflict on the war issue will not be realized." Mack, p. 135.

¹⁵ Warden, pp. 62-69.

¹⁶ Michael I. Handel, Masters of War (London: Frank Cass, 1992), p. 18.

¹⁷ "US Army Stresses Shift to Modernized, Rapid-Reaction Force," Defense News, 18-24 January 1993, p.26. Cited in Stephens, p. 26.

¹⁸ Capt. William H. Burgess, III, USA and Lt Col. Peter F. Bahnsen, USA, Retired, "Twelve Rules For Obtaining US Support," Military Review, January 1990, p. 61.

¹⁹ Mack, pp. 145-146.

²⁰ Carl von Clausewitz, On War, ed. and trans. by Michael Howard and Peter Paret, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), pp. 82-83.

²¹ Mahnken, p. 175. Also see Mack, p. 132.

²² Colin S. Gray, "Strategic Sense, Strategic Nonsense," The National Interest, Fall 1992, p. 13.

²³ Gelb, p. 5.

²⁴ For examples of areas where ethno-religious conflict has potential to threaten American interests see Margaret Blunden, "Insecurity on Europe's Southern Flank," and Clair Spencer, "Algeria in Crisis," Survival, Summer 1994, pp. 134-148, 149-163; Dudley Fishborn, "North Africa Could Turn Nasty," in The World in 1995 (London: The Economist Publications Ltd, 1994), p. 73.

25 Mahnken, p. 180.

26 Stephen Blank, "Afghanistan and Beyond: Reflections on the Future of War," Small Wars and Insurgencies, Winter 1992, pp. 228-229.

27 S.L. Arnold and David T. Stahl, "A Power Projection Army in Operations Other Than War," Parameters, Winter 1993-1994, p. 13.

28 Ibid., p. 21.

29 Blank, p. 279.

30 Robert Cooper and Mats Berdal, "Outside Intervention in Ethnic Conflicts," Survival, Spring 1993, p. 133; Eliot Cohen, "Distant Battles: Modern War in the Third World," International Security, Spring 1986, p. 133; Blank, p. 221.

31 Cohen, p. 156; Blank, p. 237.

32 Blank, p. 237.

33 John M. Collins, "Balkan Battlegrounds: US Military Alternatives," Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress, Washington, DC, 2 September 1992, pp. 7-11. Quoted in Blank, p. 234.

34 Steven Metz, "AirLand Battle and Counterinsurgency," Military Review, January 1990, pp. 38-40.

35 According to Ralph Peters, "[Ethnic] Nationalism and [Religious] Fundamentalism are not separate problems. They are essentially identical." Ralph Peters, "Vanity and the Bonfire of the 'Isms'," Parameters, Autumn 1993, pp. 40-41.

36 Ibid., p. 41.

37 Steven Metz, "Insurgency After the Cold War," Small Wars and Insurgencies, Spring 1994, p. 73.

38 Peters, p. 48.

39 Metz., "AirLand Battle and Counterinsurgency," p. 32.

40 That the Gulf War derived much of its symmetrical character from Saddam's profound military incompetence is a factor the United States cannot count on being present in its next mid-intensity conflict. In addition to Iraq, America has identified Iran and North Korea as potential adversaries. Neither is likely to provide the symmetrical conventional opponent we seek. Iran has a history of hostage-taking and state-sponsored terrorism; it also used unconventional infiltration and deception tactics in its war with Iraq. North Korean doctrine, "a combination of Soviet concepts and Chinese 'people's war,' features extensive use

of special operations forces to disrupt enemy rear areas." A National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement, The White House, July 1994, p. 7; Mahnken, p. 180.

41 Steven Metz, "AirLand Battle and Counterinsurgency," p. 40.

42 President George W. Bush, quoted in Ann Devroy and Guy Gugliotta, "Bush to 'Move Fast' on Middle East Peace," The Washington Post, March 2, 1991, p. A13. Quoted in Harry G. Summers, Jr., On Strategy II: A Critical Analysis of the Gulf War (New York: Dell, 1992), p.7.

43 Peters, p. 50.

44 Rochlin and Demchak, p. 264.

45 Frank J. Stech, "Winning CNN Wars," Parameters, Autumn 1994, p. 38.

46 Richard Szafranski, "Thinking About Small Wars," Parameters, September 1990, p. 47.

47 Collins, America's Small Wars: Lessons for the Future, p. 85.

48 Dr. Stuart Woodman, "Defining Limited Conflict: A Case of Mistaken Identity," Small Wars and Insurgencies, December 1991, p. 36.

49 Szafranski, p. 47-48; Blank, p. 236.

50 A.J. Bacevich, "Preserving the Well-Bred Horse," The National Interest, Fall 1994, pp. p. 49.

51 Ibid.

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